THINGS MORE EXCELLENT

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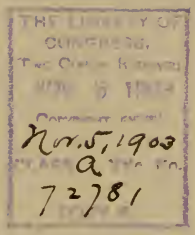
THINGS MORE EXCELLENT

By STEWARD.

Who are these that fly as a cloud,
And as the doves to their windows?
Surely the isles shall wait for me,
And the ships of Tarshish first,
To bring thy sons from far,
Their silver and their gold with them,
Unto the name of the LORD thy God,
And the Holy One of Israel,
Because He hath glorified thee.

Isa., 60: 8-9.

I. E. BAIRD, - MURFREESBORO, TENN.
MDCCCCIII.



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THINGS MORE EXCELLENT.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on Thee. Isa. 26: 3.

I.

As upon life's pathway walking–
  Gaining strength by varied way,
Much it is that sins appearing
  Do me in my journey stay.

Some of them are high, appalling!
  Yea, they are so very strong
That they gain us for adherents
  Who confess them to be wrong,

But of character are lacking
  Their onsets to much resist,
And by force of fixèd purpose
  Others with us to enlist.

This, another fact dismaying,
Others oft are hard to find,
For their wise, seductive leader
Maketh them to seem most kind.

Thus we Christians, oft elective,
Follow, serve them day by day,
As with words and acts enticing
In and out with tact do they

Come as loosened rocks of malice,
Turning, cutting server's feet,
'Sperced amongst the turves of friendship
Which doth make all things more sweet.

'Gain in home-booths they come trooping
Till there is small time to "spare,"
Thus the ones of Christian training
Are becoming much more rare:

And amongst the frosts of mercy,
Sent by God upon us here
That we trust not in earth's riches,
But to Him would draw more near:

Or, hot rays of chast'ning sunbeams,
Silvered by our Father's love
Placing groups of growing palm trees,
Where peace dwelleth, love-winged dove :

And by springs of courage sparkling–
Effervescing with hope's pow'r,
Coursing down life's hillside rugged
Cheering both to hut and tow'r;

Yea, strength-giving hope and courage,
Brothers, they, to faith and toil ;
"Wisdom" leading with love's banner
Traineth more and more from moil.

And when we the Guide-Posts study,
That we may know God's sure way,
Much their bright wings flash about us–
Causing us to go astray.

When we see our grain fields ripening–
Billowing like waves of sea,
Or our stocks by int'rest growing,
Or our cattle on the lea,

Oft 'tis evils with beguilings
Pass amongst our figures then,
Less we quickly send a message
To our God again, again.

They, too, come athwart the breezes
From our Father's sea and hill;
Which, when we with toil are wearied
Should His love and strength distill.

And when we in sleep are resting,
That we may thus well prepare
God to serve more on the morrow,
Sin's suggestions come e'en there.

Solemn is the true reflection
All results we'll see some day,
For sin never is a shadow
Flitting lightly o'er our way.–

As I passed upon life's journey,
Learning men as they are found,
Saw I once a young man standing,
Caring naught for things around.

Much his brow showed he was brooding,
And his eye, by trouble's hue,
Proved as at life's forked-path halting,
He knew not which to pursue.

Came on there an older trav'ler
Who oft looked for other's weal,
As he saw the young man halting
Felt compassion o'er him steal

And kindly said,
"Luther, why now so disturbèd,
What is it that troubleth thee?
Wilt not thou thy mind disburden
In sweet confidence to me?

"Though we oft are much perplexèd,
How and when for God to work,
'Tis not good for us to loiter,
Letting vain repinings lurk.

"For the world, a quicksand treach'rous,
More and more will us submerge
Till we have no pow'r for Jesus
And of crime are past the verge.

"Whilst to God we should go oft'ner
Than we do to earthly friends,
Yet, anon, these counsels help us
Which way 'tis our pathway trends."

Like a flash his face then brightened
That some one for him concerned,
Coming quickly to his Pastor
Showed that he for guidance yearned.

Often, 'tis, there is this longing
For the things of greatest worth,
And we Christians by indiff'rence
Cause in them a greater dearth,

When we might by loving kindness
Teach the things that satisfy.
Gratefully, then, 'twas that Luther,
To his Pastor made reply.

"O, my friend, for long I've struggled
So to walk the heavenly road,
Following so close to Jesus
That I'd miss His sharpened goad.

"But the things of earth distressed me,
Facts which were so very stern,
I by them so much was puzzled
Oft I knew not where to turn.

"I was much like one in darkness
Having neither moon nor match,
Or the man with hunger dying,
Who doth bones from rubbish snatch.

" Now, though I believe I am savèd
Through the Lord's redeeming blood;
And that Satan hath not power
To engulf me in sin's flood;

"Yet I am not well contented,
Just escaping from the foe;
I would by the Spirit's fulness
In the Christian graces grow.

"But with all my prayers and fastings–
Searching for God's sure set plan,
Stopped am I by many checkings
Like the bird by net of man.

"They to me are such a hind'rance
I have wished I'd ne'er begun
Walking God's more hedged-in pathway
With the Spirit and the Son.

" 'Gain, when seeing others living
Calmly 'mid the jars of life,
Sweetly singing as they journey
With a heart that's free from strife,

" Much their happiness I envy
And them as examples rate;
But, alas, we make such failures
When we do but imitate.

" Cans't thou not give me directions
That are sure, once and for all,
That I may be truly happy
And no more in error fall?"

Thus it is, the Spirit working
Even in a changèd heart;
Searcheth deep, then deeper searcheth
Till our conscience oft doth smart.

As time passeth, stireth deeper,
  Showing diff'rences between
Our vile hearts and that of Jesus
  Till we cannot rest serene.

Sometimes 'tis a lovèd sinning,
  Which we do not count as such,
Maketh dim the Spirit's guidance,
  Causing us to stumble much.

Missing thus, our Father's blessings,
  Many strivings end in naught,
And we loose some elevations
  For which we have bravely fought.

So now Luther stood there halting
  At the point where we decide,
If we'll breast life's river flowing
  Or on Egypt's horses ride.

Tenderly the Pastor answered,
  For his sympathy was true,
And he longed to give such guidance
  That they neither would it rue.

" I would see thy faith well rooted,
Like the oak with clinging vine,
Which, when tested will not waver
Though love's tendrils round thee twine.

" 'Tis by faith peace is attained
As when we at first believed,
When our all upon God casting
His forgiveness we received.

" So give Jesus all thy servings,
All thy sorrows and thy joy,
For the last when 'tis withholden
Oft is used us to decoy.

" Verily, as each returneth
Give it unto Christ with will,
He will take all nor be wearied
And will more His rest instill.

" And the joy of always keeping
Nearer to thy dearest friend ;
Not just sometimes at a trysting
Then to go a diff'rent trend,

"But 'tis hand in hand with Father,
And when'er the way is long
He will place His arms beneath thee,
Filling thee with tender song.

"And when 'tis from love we follow,
Duty's pain doth disappear;
Yea, we grow more like our Master
As we serve with holy fear.

"From pure principle then serve Him
In thy pleasure or thy work,
Well as in thy purest worship,
Nor let vain repinings lurk.

"As we're soldiers, well as bondmen–
Not mere pilgrims through a land,
We must be equipped for service,
Heeding quickly each command.

"So don all God's well-made armor
That 'gainst evil thou mayst stand,
For 'tis not with flesh we wrestle,
With equipments made with hand;

"But 'tis with the prince of evil,
Principalites most strong,
Rulers in the world of darkness
Coming often in a throng.

"So thy loins with truth gird firmly–
Aye, live purely for thy God;
More, appearances of evil
Keep thou well beneath the rod.

"Heart's breast-plate of right well wearing,
Maketh thee to be more brave
As thou dost thy Master follow,
And, with Him, canst others save.

"Shoe thy feet with preparation
Of the Lord's abiding peace;
Following more close to Jesus
Maketh battles more to cease.

"Keep thy burnished shield adjusted,
That thou quickly mayst it turn
Thee protecting at all angles,
Quenching all the darts that burn.

"With the helmet of salvation
Keep thy brain-wheels free from clogs,
That when man's creeds are proposèd,
Thou mayst not sink in their bogs.

"Wield thou well the sword two-edgèd–
God's true message to His own,
Well as to the unrepentant,
That no man may die alone.

"Watch and pray with perseverance
That temptations thou mayst shun,
And that saints of all the nations
In the Lord may be made one."

Then 'twas Luther walked off from him;
With his heart in humble prayer,
Bowed him down in true repentance–
God accepted any where;

Whether an awakened sinner,
Or a prodigal's return,
O'er them both the Lord is watching–
For each one his heart doth yearn.

Luther made there true confession,
Laid aside his every weight;
Afterward tried each known duty–
Happy then was his estate.

As the days and months were passing
Went he on at quickened pace,
And his true and loving Pastor
Tried to guide him by God's grace.

For he knew that much 'tis needed
In the life we live whilst here
Man should learn the rest which Jesus
Giveth those still drawing near.

Luther now was so contented–
Aye, he had such pure delight
He saw not the hill of hardship,
Though it plainly was in sight.

Just beyond was difficulty,
Flowing there both swift and wide,
Which re-crosseth all our pathways;
But we Christians have a Guide,

Who doth work all things contending,
Turning lights from God's own face,
Till they work for our advancement,
Helping us to grow in grace.

Better 'twas that these he saw not
Till his faith more firm had grown,
Lest he then had been discouraged,
Thinking he was left alone.

Often doth the Holy Spirit
Blind us to the trials here;
Then when we've reached higher grading
Showeth us there's naught to fear.

II.

Though young Christian in God's fulness
Surely grew as time went by,
Yet against his each advancement
Satan hard his arts would ply.

Luther's wont to thwart these temptings,
And to better learn God's will,
Frequently would pray the Spirit
With the Word his mind instill.

Oft would render adoration
For the flashes of His light,
Thus revealing to his servants
Something of infinite might.

Giving thanks with heartfelt singing
For our Savior's boundless love;
And that He, as Mediator,
Is upon the throne above.

In this ecstasy of worship
Luther went to see his friend,
And whilst there, in truest friendship
Heard this prayer to God ascend.

"Father, Lord, temptations gather,
And my heart is much afraid
Lest the foe, by wiles assuming,
On me now should make a raid.

" Yea, my fiercest sin besetting–
This of character the test,
Which a while hath had abating
Now doth come on with the rest.

" Keep my heart, O, Lord Almighty,
Only Thou its strength dost know,
Only Thou canst give me succor
As I wrestle with the foe.

" Louder! yet, more loud they thunder!
Yea, repeated are the shocks
As if they would force an entrance.
Though my heart hath double locks–

"One, my will which I am keeping
More resignèd in Thy hand;
Other, I'd my heart keep alway
By Thy promises well manned–

"Yet, I've naught to keep me walking
In the narrow pathway strait,
Lest Thou in Thy tender mercy
Dost both with and for me wait.

"Why, my Father, am I restless,
Why this quiv'ring in my breast?
Show to me what are Thy wishes,
Help me heed Thy least behest.

"Help me wait till I am certain,
And no more make useless haste;
When in least from Thee I waver,
Time and talents much I waste.

"I'd Thee praise for firmly dealing
As Thou dost me well prepare
For which Thou hast for me plannèd
By a loving Father's care.

" All my sins, O God, forgive me,
  Cleanse me from them day by day,
Keep me from surrounding evil,
  Lead me in the lasting way.

" And I'd plead, O Holy Spirit,
  For Thy church that's straying now;
Draw her back, O Lord Almighty,
  Till she will more humbly bow.

" Though she still hath many virtues,
  Yet she drifteth more from Thee;
Whilst so many e'en her leaders
  Think from sin she groweth free–

"O, the Bride must be made purer
  For her Husband's sure return!
Aye, if He should come this midnight
  Much her cheeks with shame would burn!

" Let Thy blessings rest upon her
  Showing sins from week to week,
May she turn more to the Scripture,
  Only there for guidance seek.

"Grant me souls, O God, for wages,
'Tis the hire for which I crave;
Grant to me the hidden power
That the many I may save.–

"Savior, though Thou art Creator,
Ruling worlds on worlds at will,
Yet it showeth me more power
That my heart Thou thus canst still."

As he onward went, and upward,
With restorèd soul-filled peace,
Luther said in truest friendship–
Not that taken on a lease:

"I wist not the prince of evil
Could thee in the least decoy,
But I deemed that all thy being
Filled wast with abiding joy.

"Which, as wells of water springing
Up within the city's wall,
'Nabled thee at each onsetting
All thy foes to well enthrall."

Thus the Pastor then rejoined:

"My dear Lord is all around me;
With His providential fire
Much my works in past consumèd,
Seemed almost 'twas done in ire.

"But withal He's ne'er impatient,
Nor in anger doth He chide;
But another task He giveth,
Nor His promptings hath denied.

"Though I well the each fulfillment
Of His promises can claim,
And His healthful balm e'er flowing
Healeth souls though e'er so maim.

"Yet I sometimes have heart-sickness,
Taking riches to the poor,
For men by their sinful gettings
Souls in jeopardy allure.

"Oft I wonder if I'm heeding
Where the Lord to me doth call,
Or if I on lines am working
Which doth much the church enthrall."

Replying Luther said :

"Thou art weary from much working,
And dost greatly need to rest,
So thou needst not be discouraged,
It is but temptation's pest.

"Peradventure to Mount Horeb
Hath the Lord now callèd thee,
As He did once for Elijah
That he might more faithful be.

"Wind and fire and earth then quaking,
Scarcely freed him from his fear;
Love's sweet voice in gentle chidings
Made his duty seem most clear.

"Afterward to him 'twas granted
God to serve in th' highest sphere
That to mortal can be given
Till in glory we appear.

"Seest thou thine own true teaching
Which to me thou did'st impart?
Well our Father kept it by me,
Now to strengthen some thy heart.

"As our God shall give me wisdom
More and more His will to see,
When thou shalt be called to heaven
Still our works shall follow thee."

"Good, my Son, is this reminder;
Truer, too, than thou dost know,
For some times I have a shrinking
From where God would have me go.

"And, anon, I have no knowledge
Of the step that doth await–
Through the wall, my way traversing,
E'en I see no tracèd gate.

"Sometimes I before it tarry,
Whilst for courage I make plea,
Or I find 'twas but mirages
Which I thought were stopping me.

"So to wait now, I am learning
When God's slightest check I feel,
There to see if I must wrestle,
Turn around or humbler kneel.–

"'Gain, the Lord hath given glimpses
Of some tasks that're set for me,
And rewards which would on follow
If from evil I would flee.

"Then to ballast me more truly,
Bade me seige lay to my heart;
For this citadel of power
Must surrender every part.

"Strong, high walls and gates well barred,
Oft I had to batter down,
E'er prepared I was to enter
Weaker walls of lesser town.

" As my sins, by grace, then seeing
I would think, when I have these
Held in check and much down trodden,
I will then have rest and ease.

" Still I'd pray the Holy Spirit
Look and see if there were ought
Which would in our work then hinder–
Sins which I had not well fought,

" Hoping all was well submitted ;
But He'd show a sin to be
Whilst in love He'd say through Scripture
Give thou this one up for Me.

" Each time when I gain a vict'ry,
Afterward He'd throw more light
Deeper in my heart's recesses,
Showing spots as black as night.

"Oft it seemed to me a cavern
With dim gal'ries everywhere,
Doors each side so firmly closèd,
I, anon, thought none was there.

" Now, I often pray for progress
And He ope's for me a door,
Bidding me to fight and conquor
Even by mine own heart's gore.

"For there's more than I can reckon,
More than now my frame can bear ;
By degrees I'll grip them firmly
If I will abide in prayer.

"Only thus we grow like Jesus,
He our Father's first born child
Who had character of metal,
Well as traits both meek and mild.

"All His life He fought hard battles,
Yea, until His very death,
And He only gained the vict'ry
With His last drawn, feeble breath.

"More, though we at death are winners,
Christ must needs come from the grave,
And when He, His throne resumèd
He triumphantly could save."

III.

Worker's hearts so much holpen
By a sympathetic word,
And by interchange of studies
Oft to deeper valor stirred.

Often, yes, we plead for comrades,
Yea, for them most anxious are;
And, anon, are much surprisèd
At the answer looked not for.

Oft we ask but faith then falters–
Unbelief doth make us hide,
This essential act forgetting
We with Christ must well abide ;

Till all things work tongue and grooving,
Which doth try the hearts of men,
Thus for answers we must tarry
Till we will abide again.

Doubtless thus these friends were mated,
And perhaps were not aware–
Friendship bands are best cemented
By the interchange of prayer.

Though so many years between them,
Yet they bridged them o'er with love,
Rather, built the gulf up solid
With a hedged-in road above.

And as they kept toiling upward,
Happy in their sure estate,
Much they'd help each other forward,
Nor did either have to wait.

But as paths are often crossing,
Some times going side by side,
'Gain mere stepping stones of promise–
In this life none ever ride,

They would hold the sacred converse,
Humbly speak of battles fought;
And when 'twas that they were straying
How their Savior had them sought.

How, in love, He'd drawn them nearer,
More as Brother than as King,
And continued drawing closer
Till they could His praises sing.

As they once were pressing forward,
Speaking on a kindred theme,
Luther said with deepest feeling,
Moved thereto by love supreme.

"Father I've a deep'ning hunger
For the souls by sin depraved.
Would I had God-given power
To arouse them to be saved.

"And, oft times, I much am troubled–
Grieving for the Gentile church,
Fearing we, by worldlings getting,
Much have placed her in a lurch."

"Son, fret not thy soul to sinning,
Whatsoever may betide,
All things whatsoe'er combined,
Ne'er God's power can o'er ride.

"Church He needeth not, nor nation,
That His word He may fulfill.
If they either have full power
She must well perform His will.

Yes, I surely fear like Shiloh,
Growing is our church to-day;
'Less she'll tread God's way more firmly
He will take her light away.

"Step thou in the breach now wid'ning,
Plead with her, help her return!
E'er she'll cross His righteous limit,
E'er, for aye, His anger burn!

"Yea, seek thou a def'nite calling
And no more at random serve,
Wheresoe'er thy Master sendeth
From hard duties do not swerve.

"Ways of serving there are many
Here our Lord to glorify,
And if thou wilt follow fully
He thy needs will well supply.

"In the city slums so crowded
Where they strive for daily bread–
Toiling there just for a pittance,
There is nanght for thee to dread.

"They are longing–but not hoping,
They are waiting–but for what!
Aye, their mis'ry ever beck'neth,
Come and mitigate our lot.

"And thou, too, canst share thy service
With the ones of better class,
Who, by fortune's sad reverses,
'Twixt life's mill-stones oft must pass.

"Thou canst meet these with the wealthy,
That each other's burdens they
In their arms of faith may carry,
As they for each other stay.–

"In the mountains old and stately
Where the sparkling rivers rise,
Where the air is pure and bracing,
Seeming coming from the skies;

" Where the luscious fruits are gathered
And the bird is on the wing,
Aye, where all the growths of nature
God's true praises sweetly sing;

" But where man with many hardships
Doth a scanty living eke,
Thus are scarce enough forehanded
For another home to seek,

" Who have sterling worths for training,
And but only need a chance
Till they will for church and nation
Much prosperity enhance;

" Many are the souls immortal
Serving God in Christian strength,
And to Him for workers praying
That the Lord may rule at length.–

" On the ranches wide and rolling,
Where the 'cow-boy' hies away
In their yearly business 'round-ups,'
Or at camp more closely stay,

" They have few to oft remind them
That God's eye is every where,
And if they would be 'successful'
They must spend much time in prayer.–

" To the mining camps so rugged
Is the Lord now beck'ning thee?
They are rich in souls most precious
That from sin Christ can set free.

" This we learn from earthy miners,
Christians well must dig, mid all,
But our Father in His wisdom
Only letteth good ores fall

" In the furnace where He's smelting
Bullion for His mint one day;
Glorious is the sure time coming
When all dross shall pass away,

" And we each shall bear His image
Stamped within His heavenly mint!
Being then of purest coinage
We will serve without a stint.–

"There is work amongst the sailors
On the land as well as sea,
For their hearts are sorely tempted
When from duty they are free.

" Yea, the gate-ways to the nations,
By unrighteous atmosphere–
More than leaf by briney breezes
Maketh moral life to sear.

" But the ones who do prove faithful,
As they pass on to and fro,
Help to prove the Spirit's power
O'er our persevering foe.

"O, that more before time passes,
Would to them a welcome give
In a Christian 'Home' or 'Bethel'
Helping them for God to live.–

"And there is Christ's last commission;
Dear it must be to His heart,
For if we bring not the heathen
He will only have a part

"Of His price for sacrifices
Which eternally He made,
When His faith saw our condition
And our ransom fully weighed.

"Shall we not, this way accepting,
Give the gospel to all lands,
Wooing them by Christian graces
Till they wear Christ's love-knit bands?

"But the one most special serving–
Dearer than all else to me
As I try to preach the gospel,
Is to see the Hebrews free.

" 'Tis an old, an honored people
And e'er long will come the days
When the hills and dales of Canaan
Will reverberate with praise

"Unto Christ as Priest and Prophet,
And their daily sacrifice,
Whilst from off their true heart's altar
Fragrant incense will arise."

"But I have a shrinking, Father,
From the working on this line;
If this church should come to Jesus
What would happen then to mine?

"It doth seem to me the prophets
Tell of times, by them foreseen,
When again will church extensions
More than unto Hebrews lean.

"Whilst I may, I'd keep all workings
Well within the Gentile kirk,
But I'd gladly have the Hebrews
Join us in our Christian work."

"Souls, my Son, are in the balance
Weighing for their weal or woe;
Wilt thou for the love of Gentiles
Put them in eternal throe?

"Wilt thou not for love of Jesus
Hasten on this longed for day,
By God's grace, as thou art able,
Cast the hindering blocks away?

"With thy God thou canst not wrestle
Nor His Word canst set aside.
Sue thou humbly for His pardon
For thy sinful churchly pride."

"Father, there's another serving
That is nearer to my heart,
Why should I from it have parting
And with Hebrews bear a part?"

"Thou need'st not quit aught of working
That thy Master showeth thee,
But 'twill help in other servings
If thou'dst friend to Hebrews be."

Patriarch with face then beaming,
Aye, whole attitude intense
As if two horizons having–
This the saint's sextuple sense,

Saw beyond his earthly vision–
Viewed things in a diff'rent sphere,
And by them was so transported
That his home seemed very near;

Yes, so near that he might touch it
If he'd but put forth his hand;
So, by faith, he said thus musing
Gazing on that happy land,

"When my tasks have all been finished,
When my battles all are fought,
Then will I go home to heaven–
That blest land for which I've sought.

"Yea, in arms of mighty angels,
Far from things of earth, though dear,
Will my soul go to her Maker;
Where she'll never have a fear.

"There she'll give her pent up service
To the one who is her Lord,
For he is her Savior, Brother,
Who doth keep in safest ward.

"Though to earth return my body
And this scattered far by lust,
Yet the Lord in love will watch it
And will bring it from the dust.

"Soul and body 'gain united
Then forever more shall dwell,
In that bright celestial country
From which sinful angels fell.

"But now stations there are fixèd,
Even angels are secure;
Ne'er again will foe have pow'r
Saint or angel to allure.

"Sweet have been anticipations,
Sweeter far to enter in
Where the golden streets are burnished–
Tarnished not with any sin.

"Where there never cometh darkness,
Moon or sun to set or rise
But the Lamb of God with glory
Antitypes the earthly skies.

" Nor is there the fluctuating
Of the restless sea of life,
Where the masses for existence
Wage an ever death-grip strife.

'But to Him who overcometh,
There shall live without a care,
In that land of love and plenty;
Yea, none e'er grow aged there.

"And there'll be there no injustice,
But each giveth each his due
Well pressed down in fullest measure,
Nor will any for it sue.

"O, 'tis one eternal Sabbath,
And our meeting there is sweet
In that heavenly sanctuary
Bowing at our Savior's feet.

"And 'tis pure in every aspect,
Typical of which we here
Have the sacred meeting houses
Where before Him we appear.

"But we there need not a temple,
For the Lord Himself's a shrine;
Coextensive 'tis with heaven,
Part that worship will be mine.

"As we tell how he redeemed us
From our sin and even stain;
Finished thus our sure salvation
Which no more shall seem to wain.

"Glorious is the thought transcendent
I the Godhead e'en shall see,
And will understand some, doubtless,
What hath here so puzzled me,

"Sitting, and enthroned the highest
There triumphant o'er each foe,
Where He holdeth crowns unfading
And in love doth them bestow.

"Yea, hath held them safely always
Till His time He did complete,
Till we came and made our circuit
And would lay them at His feet.

"Unto Him be all the glory
Saints and angels e'er can raise,
For He is the One Eternal
Prince and King of all the days."

IV

Oft our influence unexpected,
Sometimes even when we thought
To ourselves were all our actions
And beyond us all was naught–

E'en when of it we're not thinking,
Crops out in our neighbors nigh,
Startling us like thunder crashing
From an almost cloudless sky.

Or it causeth bright production,
As the spring time sun and rain
Doth endow the earth with promise–
Cheering hearts like sweet refrain.

So the influence of this Pastor
O'er the one beneath his care;
Giving him the true instruction
Kept him safe from many a snare:

Helped him live so near to Jesus
That he had no love for sin,
But longed more to bear God's message
Unto foe and nearest kin.

O this influence of a pastor!
Who of it can calculate!
Bringing lost ones into safety,
Eering ones can reinstate.

This the grandest of all callings,
This the highest and the best;
Though it hath the many labors
Yet, can have the purest rest.

And how dear are older pastors!
Yea, what tender love have they!
With the church they show such patience,
O, so much for her they pray!

What true guides—how wise in council
For young men and to old age,
Humbly showing where the Master
Would have them their pow'rs engage.

Blessèd is the church which hath one–
  Hath an agèd pastor true ;
Who, their joys and sorrows sharing
  Traineth all God's will to do.

Dear old stalwart men gray-headed,
  Or bowed down with weights they bore !
May they have love's true attention !
  Grant, O Lord, there may be more!

In a bright and lovèd country,
  Though a far and heathen shore,
There to God and to his Pastor
  Luther's sowing fruitage bore.

(Mind and heart he once determined,
  Thinking not of person'l ease,
Thinking not of past endeavors
  Only so his God to please,

Then it was he loved the heathen
  Who with us are on a par
In our Father's love and mercy–
  Ancestry nor time doth mar.)

He found souls whom Christ is loving,
Bodies which he died to save
There in deepest sin were living,
Deeper, darker than the grave.–

Do we Christians live more purely
As compared with heathen lands,
Who, the Lord profess to follow
Yet keep not his known commands?–

Then he wrought for God and heathen,
Wrought in health of body prime,
Wrought till strength was 'most exhausted–
Wasted not his Father's time.

O, the hardships which these suffer,
Gladly bear for Jesus' sake!
We at home, we slothful Christians,
Should these for example take.

If we cannot go on Missions
We can give until we feel,
God will bless us in the effort,
Then before Him we can kneel

There to pray His richest blessings
On the ones now far away,
And when these, by mail, shall know it
God will praise for earthly stay.

Yea, e'en here we can save heathen,
For the Spirit's every where,
And the instant we are praying
Our request can answer there.–

Gracious is our God, and loving,
Bearing long with sinners here,
But there is a sure time coming
When as Judge will He appear.

And if Christ doth not stand with them,
Showing for them His death wound,
Where, O where, will be their sending
When God's judgments shall resound!

Then will they cry rocks and mountains
Fall on us and hide our woe!
Piercing their unlooked for anguish
As they into darkness go.

Wilt thou not give them the gospel
That thou thinkest set thee free?
If thou dost not—at the judgment
What will Jesus say to thee?

Luther, soon among the heathen
Found a great narcotic curse,
Sold there by his country's warrant!
Filling, so called, Christian's purse.

O, his soul did bow in anguish
When he felt this curse was there;
Knew that it was not sufficient
Fighting only with His prayer.

But, by faith, he knew his Father
Heedeth when His children cry,
If they act as they petition
Whilst to Him they draw more nigh.

So he pleaded for his people
That they might rise high above
These deep sins which white men taught them—
Rise and understand God's love.

Understand the love which Jesus
Beareth unto sinners here,
E'er so much they are polluted
Yet to Him they are most dear.

Pleaded God would stop the making,
Making of th' accursèd stuff;
Which doth prey on soul and body,
Never saying 'tis enough.

It is here as well as yonder,
Though, perchance, some see it not,
And they who are 'neath its swaying
Have an awful, awful lot–

Father, stir thy sluggish children!
We who are afraid to fight
Lest the foe should gain the battle,
Leaving us in sadder plight.

O, that Chritians would not limit
God incarnate's spirit work!
O, that we would rid our land of
This, from which so many shirk!

For 'tis hard to meet temptations,
Meet and trample under feet
Sins we form or do inherit,
Coming oft from friends we meet.

Luther, though he oft was grieving
For both home and foreign lands,
Yet he was not oft discouraged,
But sought more the Lord's commands.

There he grew in Christian graces,
Clearer did his sins he see;
Clearer saw in God's Word holy
Promises both rich and free.

Each strife which he waged with Satan–
Conquering through the Saviour's blood,
Then the Spirit true would lift him
More above life's troublous flood.

There he told the love of Jesus
As he used his healing art,
And his Master showed His presence
As He changed a patient's heart.–

O, the joy for us in heaven,
There before our Saviour's face,
Seeing souls which we awakened
Waiting us in that bright place!

Hear our Savior's Come thou blessèd
To this home prepared for thee,
For in bringing these to glory
Thou hast ministered to Me.–

God is good to all His children,
Giving more than we will ask;
Luther took one special service,
But God added to his task.

Wide He used the reputation
Luther gave Him long ago;
Used it freely for His glory
As He sent him to and fro.

From his home there came the message
Needed there was his advice
Much to check the fiend intemp'rance,
Practiced still at such a price.

Yes, he had just double blessing
That he had when home he left–,
When we give to God our choosing,
Ne'er of works are we bereft.

L. of C.

V

Many ranges in life's mountains,
  Many spurs and peaks are there ;
And life's clouds so much are passing
  That our days are not all fair.

Some days bright and others hazy
  Gives variety to all ;
And the dark but makes a setting
  For the ones we fairer call.–

When we first begin this climbing,
  Eyes and muscles then untrained,
Much we falter–much we stumble
  And by falling oft are pained.

Some times longing for the low-lands
  Though we know malaria's there,
Thus, 'tis only by God's holding
  That to glory we are heir.

Frequently our powers using
Strengtheneth them from day to day,
And by climbing on yet higher
Beauteous scenes ope' on our way,

Cheering us to still go onward,
Lay aside the things of clay,
Watching for the coils of Satan
Hid e'en there to lead astray.

Sluggish ones down at the bottom,
Or but half way up the slant,
Scarcely have more than a pittance
Of the Lord's abundant grant.

But the ones who're persevering
Well can others gather round,
And can lead them to rich blessings
In our Father's vantage ground.

As he still life's mountain climbing,
Which so much his strength had tried,
Luther grew there much more stalwart
High upon its rugged side.

Now, he wielded well his armor,
Serious though bright his face,
Then, heseemèd to be musing
Whilst he e'er kept taut his pace.

Chanced he once to meet a Rabbi
Zealous for the Lord most high ;
Longing much for his redemption
Luther said, then drawing nigh,

"O, thou man of earth the wonder !
Thou full-blood of Jacob's seed !
Grow not now with me impatient,
Hear me as in love I plead !

"Stirred am I, my true heart aching,
As I see the Hebrew kneel,
For the land to Abram promised
To the Lord of Host appeal.

"Why doth He thus keep you captive?
He of old didst wonders do.
Why hath God, the Lord-Jehovah,
Changed His dealings thus with you?

"He doth naught without a reason
With the nation or the man;
In the past he kept not silent
But showed chosen ones His plan.

"Now, for many, many centuries,
Not since days of Malachi,
Hath He by a prophet spoken
If the latest we deny.

"Is Messiah never coming?
Will ye ne'er more have your home?
Will ye never have a welcome
As throughout the world ye roam?

"'Tis with deep and loving longing
That I probe this long time sore;
O, thou Israelitish Rabbi
Canst thou tell me nothing more!

"Must ye always be held captive,
You whom God set far apart?
Will he ne'er for you show favor
With a Father's loving heart?"

"O thou much deluded Gentile!
When will ye your folly see
That the one whom ye call Master
Our Messiah can never be?"

"We for centuries have worshiped
Christ, the LORD, the great I AM
Through the faith He laid in Adam –
Broader laid in Abraham.

"And yet clearer unto Moses,
When his life commission gave,
When He sent him unto Israel
That from bondage He might save."

"Now, that cannot be, O Gentile!
For the time is near at hand
When again the sons of Jacob
Shall possess their native land.

"And ere long will come Messiah
Taking up His earthly reign;
As He'll come a King eternal
Ne'er our kingdom 'gain shall wane.

"Then, moreover will ye Gentiles
Unto Him your trophies bring,
Of your wealth and erudtion,
Whilst ye will His praises sing.

"And we'll give to you a portion
In the which soever tribe
It shall please you them to settle;
Nor your actions circumscribe.

"O, 'twill be a glorions coming!
And for Him we'll well prepare
Following the Lord's direction
With an ever zealous care.

"O, that we the faith possessèd
Even now to enter in
To the land of our possessions,
And ere long this work begin!"

"Yes, your land ye shall inherit
For God's promises come true;
And when He shall give commandment
Nothing then can hinder you.

"That we have you much abusèd
I have oft confessed with shame,
Whilst to God I prayed most humbly
He would cleanse us from the blame.

"Not alone 'gainst you we're sinning,
By our vile, un-Christ like way,
But against our Lord's appearing
If on Gentiles He doth stay.

"These events the same are, Rabbi,
And perchance we'll both be there
Where for Christ and for Messiah,
We together will prepare.

"Aye, when I am some discouraged
Then I cry Why is this fear,
When at any passing moment
David's Son may here appear,

"And translate me into Canaan
That grim death I may not see!
But with saints the quick and risen
I eternally shall be!

"This doth lift faith to quintessence!
'Tis to courage deepest stay!
And to love an undercurrent,
Type of our abiding day

"Where I'll bask in His dear presence
And shall see Him as He is!
O, that He in love infinite
Should acknowledge me as His!

"Yea, I'll live with saints of ages,
Who my Saviour here did own,
Such as Job and Zechariah
Who have faith so bravely shown.

'In the presence of such worthies
Seemeth me that I will stand
Whilst they sit in places higher
Nearer to the LORD'S right hand.

"These e'en now await in glory
Till our serving here is through,
When all souls their way not having
Will to God's will bow in lieu."

"Can this be! O, art thou certain!
Are these Two the One and Same!
Aye, will all the true and faithful
Worship in Jehovah's name!

"Doth Christ tally to the Prophets,
Filling well what they demand?
Will He have an earthly kingdom
In our own Messiah's land?"

"Scripture just compare with Scripture,
That that's former with the last–
They dove-tail into each other,
And remember all's not past,

"But there is a Second Coming;
We are watching all the time,
And ye, 'gain, are much convinced
That all things are nearing prime."

"O some One is surely coming!
Yea, the time doth draw apace!
Even now to those who're watching
His fore runners we can trace

"Holy God, help me to grasp it
That these Two the same will be!
And that in the blessèd God-head
There are Sacred Persons Three!"

THE END.

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